

Bleasdale Church of England Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119520
Local Authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	327058
Inspection date	11 September 2008
Reporting inspector	Kathleen McArthur

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	4–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	20
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rev Jeff Finch
Headteacher	Mrs Fiona Feeney
Date of previous school inspection	1 December 2005
Date of previous funded early education inspection	Not previously inspected
Date of previous childcare inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Bleasdale Preston Lancashire PR3 1UY
Telephone number	01995 61307

Age group	4–11
Inspection date	11 September 2008
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Fax number

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Age group 4–11

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

This very small school draws pupils from a wide, isolated rural area. All the pupils are of White British heritage and they are taught in two mixed age classes. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is much lower than in most schools and no pupils receive a free school meal. The school holds weekly 'Little Learners' sessions for pre-school children and is a satellite centre for Garstang Children's Centre. Movement of pupils in and out of the school during an academic year is a little above that found nationally.

The school holds national Healthy Schools and Investors in People status, the Basic Skills 2 award, two 'eco' flags and Green Partnership environmental awards. In July 2008 the school gained the Race Equality Mark.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school where pupils benefit from excellent partnerships between home and school. They flourish, achieve well and their personal development is outstanding. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive; one spoke for many saying, 'The school has a unique family atmosphere.' The headteacher's outstanding leadership inspires all aspects of the school's work and she is ably supported by the committed team of staff and governors. They build on the strong links with the church, local residents and other small schools to make the school a happy learning community.

Attainment on entry is broadly average but small numbers mean it can vary from year to year. Pupils make good progress because they enjoy school and are taught well. By the end of Year 6 standards are above the national average. Academic progress is tracked thoroughly and shows that performance in mathematics has been weaker than in English and science, partially because pupils lack quick, accurate recall of multiplication tables. Actions to raise standards in writing for younger pupils are proving successful, as seen in recent teacher assessments at Year 2.

Children are very happy in school and say, 'It's small and friendly.' They have an excellent understanding of how to keep healthy and stay safe. Behaviour is exemplary; pupils of all ages work and play together harmoniously. Attendance is above average. Good levels of care, guidance and support make every child feel secure and valued. Consequently, they carry out responsibilities willingly and show high levels of care and consideration for others. Their strong community spirit makes them eager to contribute to church and local events but their knowledge of different lifestyles and cultures in the worldwide community is not so well developed. Good academic standards and outstanding personal skills form a good platform for future success.

The school is well led and managed and provides good value for money. Direction provided by the leadership has led to good improvement since the previous inspection and issues raised then have been overcome. Children now make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage, subject leadership has improved and pupils are more involved in assessment so they know how to improve their work. Governors and staff are fully committed to raising standards and enhancing the building and facilities whilst working to secure the school's future. They know the children and their families very well and listen to and act on their views. Consequently, the school is well placed for further improvement.

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

Grade: 2

Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are taught alongside Key Stage 1 pupils. Good leadership ensures the children are well cared for in a warm, supportive environment by adults who know them well and really want them to succeed. Sensitive induction procedures, a welcoming ethos and pre-school experience at 'Little Learners' ensure children start school confidently and make good progress. They quickly learn to share, help each other and take turns. Their behaviour is excellent as they eagerly investigate all the activities on offer. Good teaching provides a lively curriculum tailored to children's individual needs. However, teacher-directed sessions sometimes last too long and do not move along at a sufficiently brisk pace so learning slows down. All resources are used effectively, especially the woodland area; the children eagerly changed into outdoor shoes to go outside, finding model animals and sounding the letters of their names. Progress is carefully checked so children receive extra help

where needed. When they move to Year 1, most have reached, and occasionally exceeded, the learning goals for their age.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' achievement in mathematics
- Extend pupils' awareness and understanding of the wider world and global communities.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Pupils are taught well, enjoy school, work hard and make good progress. Mixed-age groups in both classes ensure pupils proceed seamlessly from year to year so learning builds progressively. Standards are just above average by the end of Key Stage 1. In the most recent teacher assessments for Year 2 (summer 2008), all pupils reached the nationally expected Level 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. Half the group exceeded their targets at the higher Level 3 in reading and mathematics. Standards are above average by the end of Key Stage 2. In the most recent published test results for Year 6 (summer 2007), all pupils reached the expected Level 4. They performed strongly at the higher level in science but none reached the higher Level 5 in mathematics. Provisional results for 2008 indicate that pupils all attained Level 4 in English, mathematics and science. Although they all gained the higher Level in English and did well in science, only half attained this level in mathematics. Lack of quick recall and secure knowledge of multiplication facts slows pupils' responses in mental mathematics calculations. Skilled support for pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities enables them to progress well in relation to their capabilities.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are outstanding. They know how to eat healthily and participate eagerly in the wide range of physical activities on offer; every pupil, from Reception to Year 6, goes swimming each week. Behaviour is excellent and pupils say they feel very safe and secure in school and are sure there is no bullying because, 'we are surrounded by friends'. Spiritual, moral and social development is outstanding. Pupils are keen to help others and the school is very much at the heart of this scattered local community. They enjoy entertaining governors and local residents at school events and play a full role in church and local activities. Positive attitudes to work, concern for others and for the environment and good academic progress are providing a secure foundation for future life as responsible citizens. Cultural development is good. Pupils learn about major world religions but live in a relatively isolated area and are less aware of multicultural life in the wider global community.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Well-planned lessons meet the needs of different ages and abilities in the two mixed-age classes. Staff know their pupils very well and make good use of tracking and assessment information to plan work that challenges each pupil. Pupils say their teachers are helpful and encourage them and that their work is 'usually about right'. Targets are given confidentially to each pupil to share with their parents; pupils know their own targets and work hard to reach

them. The pace of lessons does slow down sometimes; for example, pupils are kept waiting for other groups to receive their tasks before starting work and this can slow their learning. Teaching assistants are skilled and provide good support. Sometimes, opportunities to utilise these skills to support specific groups or individuals during whole-class sessions are missed.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Literacy and numeracy feature strongly in the broad and balanced curriculum but other subjects are not neglected. Good provision for information and communication technology (ICT) ensures pupils develop skills in line with their age and there is a wide range of physical activities.

Teachers link subjects to make learning meaningful. For example, a lesson on healthy foods involved English and science. The curriculum is suitably adapted so all pupils, particularly those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, receive work that challenges them. The excellent programme of personal and social education results in very well adjusted, sensible pupils. The school makes excellent use of the rich outdoor environment for learning, worship and play; pupils love using the resources offered by the woodland area and the surrounding countryside. The very good range of clubs and extra activities really enhance and broaden pupils' experiences, such as expert physical education tuition, trips, a residential visit and work in conjunction with other small schools.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Staff and governors know the pupils and their families well; many pupils are the second or third generation to attend the school. Staff build on this strong local support, providing high quality care so pupils enjoy school and achieve well. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils are robust and meet all current requirements. All pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported both academically and in the development of their personal and social skills. Tracking systems provide staff with good information about academic progress so extra help is quickly directed where needed. Pupils strive hard to achieve their individual targets and know what they must do to improve their work.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher's enthusiasm and dedication inspires a strong team spirit. Her vision for improvement is fully shared by staff, governors and parents and is informed by rigorous self-evaluation. Equality of opportunity is central to this vision; there are no barriers to learning and the school is an inclusive and harmonious community. Excellent partnerships with the local community, other schools and external agencies benefit pupils and their families. Governance is good. Governors are closely involved in the life of the school and provide valuable local knowledge and links with the church. Subject leaders have responsibility for several curriculum areas and carry out their role well. Careful data analysis contributes to action plans for school improvement. All management systems are in place so the school runs smoothly. Performance management and staff training is closely linked to areas identified for improvement. The school has good capacity to build on what has already been achieved.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	2
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	2
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

12 September 2008

Dear Children

Inspection of Bleasdale Church of England Primary School, Lancashire,

PR3 1UY

You made me very welcome when I visited your school recently. You were all friendly and polite so I enjoyed my day with you very much. I was very impressed by your singing and by the way you are all such good friends. Thank you for helping me complete my work. I thought you would like to know what I found.

Bleasdale is a good school with an outstanding headteacher and a good team of teachers, staff and governors. They care for you well, plan interesting lessons and provide lots of extra activities, clubs and outings. You make good progress from Reception to Year 6 and reach standards in your work that are higher than in most schools.

You told me how much you enjoy school and your parents told me that they are very happy with the school. They can certainly be proud of your excellent behaviour and the care you show for each other. I know you do a lot for the village and the church and enjoy working with the other schools in the area.

I have asked your teachers to make your school even better by:

improving your knowledge of times tables so you can answer mental maths questions quickly and get them all right

helping you learn more about different communities and ways of life in the wider world.

I know you will want to do everything you can to help the staff and look after each other so Bleasdale School will continue to be a really happy place!

My very best wishes to you all.

Mrs Kathleen McArthur

Lead inspector